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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR P (DBAME), EUR/ERA, AND EUR/RPM

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN UNION EXERCISES BATTLEGROUP COMMAND AND CONTROL

REF: A. BRUSSELS 02569 B. BRUSSELS 01904 C. BRUSSELS 01164 D. BRUSSELS 04 05308 E. USEU TODAY  
NOVEMBER 22

Classified By: USEU Charge d'affaires Michael McKinley for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary. The EU began an exercise November 22 to test the Command and Control procedures linking the "political level" in Brussels with a Framework Nation EU Operational Headquarters and with a deployable Force Headquarters in the case of an EU Battlegroup deployment. NATO International Staff elected not to observe. The MILEX exercise was scheduled to end December 1. End summary.

12. (C) The European Union began an exercise dubbed MILEX 05 on November 22. The Command Post Exercise (CPX), coordinated by the EU Military Staff in Brussels, tested the Command and Control system between the "political level" in Brussels, and for exercise purposes, an Operational Headquarters (OHQ - located in Paris) and a Force Headquarters (FHQ -- located in Ulm Germany) for the deployment of an EU Battlegroup. (Refs B-D) This is the first time an EU Framework Nation OHQ has been activated as part of an ESDP exercise. MILEX also tested the "augmentation" procedures that will provide additional officers for the HQ in the event of a deployment. The exercise was under the "guidance" of the EU's Political and Security Committee. The scenario for the exercise "supported the need" for an autonomous EU-led operation which required the deployment of military forces. As in other recent Battlegroup seminars and workshops, the issue of recourse to SHAPE as the OHQ under the Berlin Plus arrangements was left unaddressed, as the exercises focus on autonomous EU-led operations. For MILEX, the specific scenario unfolded as growing friction between ethnic groups over contested territory on the fictitious island of "Atlantia."

13. (C) MILEX 05 focused exclusively on the military aspects of crisis management. Some 375 "players" and supporting personnel took part in the exercise, scheduled to last until December 1. We were told by Olaf Stocker, Defense Advisor at the German Representation to the EU (protect), that under agreed procedures, NATO was invited to observe the exercise. According to Ilay Ferrier (UK) in the NATO International Staff (IS) Operations office, it was mutually agreed that there would be little to be gained by NATO observing the EU Military Staff's "white cell" role in Brussels since the focus is on internal EU procedures. MILEX was briefed to NATO November 21, and the IS made the allies aware of the exercise. The EU first briefed MILEX to NATO in April 2005.

14. (C) In the April session, the EU also briefed NATO on their planning for MILEX-06 which was to occur 27 March - 6 April 2006. This was to be another Command Post-type exercise, based on a scenario for an EU-led operation with recourse to NATO assets and capabilities to support the implementation of an EU-brokered Framework Agreement. The exercise was to occur at EUMS in Brussels, with an EU OHQ at SHAPE, and at an activated EU Field HQ. The scenario was to draw upon NATO-EU crisis management exercises from 2003, where D/SACEUR was previously appointed EU Op Cdr with his EU OHQ at SHAPE. MILEX-06 was to focus on the interaction between the EU OHQ at SHAPE and an EU FHQ, in order to develop the Planning Guidance, draft CONOPS and SOR. In June, the EU canceled its MILEX-06 exercise for a "variety of reasons," but most notably (per IS' Mr. Ferrier) because of the EU's inability to get agreement on which EU Field HQ to activate to support MILEX-06.

15. (C) MILEX 05 represented the next step in the "natural progression" of the UK Presidency's goal of making ESDP more capable, more coherent, and more active. (See ref A.) Plans are already progressing for the next series of exercises in 2007 which will test the Command and Control for multinational Battlegroups. According to Lt. Colonel Bertie Polley of UKEU, discussions are already underway between the UK and Sweden, lead nation of the "Nordic Battlegroup." Each Battlegroup in the rotation schedule will be tied to one of the four identified national OHQs to be available within the EU. The lead nation for a multinational Battlegroup will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the nation providing the OHQ setting out the details of the arrangement. Current

plans call for OHQs to be made available by the French (Paris), the Germans (Potsdam), Italy (site undetermined), and the UK (Northwoods.) Discussions are still ongoing concerning possible use of the EU Operations Center to be established in Brussels in 2006 as an OHQ for future deployments.

16. (C) Comment: MILEX was launched with great fanfare at the same time as the EDA Code of Conduct for Defense Procurement was announced. The military implications of the exercise may be limited, but the move was presented politically as a significant enhancement of Battlegroup development. This is the first time an EU OHQ has been stood up for an exercise. Although NATO International Staff and Missions were briefed early in the year, the timing of the announcement caught many by surprise. In subsequent conversations with senior EU ESDP policymakers, Charge emphasized the importance of transparency and the need for greater dialogue on operational aspects related to standing up Battlegroups. Clearly more needs to be done to improve communication as Battlegroup development proceeds.

McKinley

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